

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed 3/23/2007, and further in view of the interview of 05/18/2007. Applicants are appreciative of the courteous Examiner interview, and are further appreciative of the Examiner for providing clarification language for the pending claims. As per the Examiner's suggestions, clarifying language has been incorporated in the claims via the current amendment. No new matter has been added via the current amendment.

Applicants would also like to respectfully remind the Examiner that there have been numerous office actions since the filing of 09/01/1999. Specifically, a review of the file wrapper indicates at least six office actions between 01/16/2002 and 03/23/2007. Applicants would like to respectfully remind Examiner that as per MPEP 707.02, "Application up for Third Action and 5-Year Applications," the "supervisory patent examiners should impress their Assistants with the fact that the shortest path to the final disposition of an application is by finding the best references on the first search and carefully applying them" and "any application that has been pending five years should be carefully studied by the supervisory patent examiner and every effort should be made to terminate its prosecution."

In the spirit of moving prosecution forward, Applicants conducted the Examiner interview and are thankful for the extremely courteous and professional interview in which the Examiner suggested various clarifying language. The current amendment includes various clarifying language suggested by the Examiner. Applicants are hopeful that the clarifying amendments should make the pending claims allowable.

It should be noted that such clarifying amendments are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution, and, Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue previously pending claims in one or more continuations and/or divisional patent applications.

This response should obviate outstanding issues and make the remaining claims allowable. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of this response.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

1. Claims 1, 2, 5-10, 12-16, and 18-22 are pending.
2. Claims 1-2, 5-10, 12-16 and 18-22 are rejected under 35U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lui et al. (US 2002/0118220) and Cataudella et al. (6,456,296).

OVERVIEW OF CLAIMED INVENTION

The present invention provides a computer-based method of visually delineating a relationship between related graphical objects in a graphical user interface, the method comprising: associating at least one icon with at least two diverse, but related graphical objects, said icon having an associated color scheme, when one of said related graphical objects is displayed, displaying said icon within said displayed graphical object; and wherein said displayed graphical objects are recognizable as related by the persistence of said icon with said associated color scheme in said displayed graphical objects.

The present invention also provides a computer-based method of delineating a relationship between related graphical objects, said method comprising: associating at least one

icon with a first graphical object, said icon having an associated color scheme; displaying a second graphical object diverse from, but related to said first graphical object; displaying said icon within said second object, and wherein said second object is recognizable as related to said first object by the persistence of said icon with said associated color scheme.

The present invention also provides a computer-based method of graphically illustrating a progressive relationship between a series of related graphical objects comprising: associating at least one icon with a first graphical object, said icon having a specified color scheme; displaying said icon with said specified color scheme within said first graphical object; progressively displaying a series of graphical objects diverse from, but related to said first graphical object, said one or more related graphical objects to reflect an evolution of progression of development of said first graphical object, and wherein said icon with said specified color scheme is displayed within each of said related graphical objects.

The present invention also provides a computer program product for use with a graphics display device, said computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means included in said medium: said computer readable program code means embodying a method for: associating at least one icon with at least two diverse, but, related graphical objects, wherein said icon has an associated color scheme; when one of said related graphical objects is displayed, displaying at least one replica of said icon within said displayed graphical object; and wherein said displayed graphical objects are recognizable as related by the persistence of said icon with said associated color scheme in said displayed graphical objects.

The present invention also provides a computer program product for use with a graphics display device, said computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means included in said medium, said computer readable program code means embodying a method for: associating at least one icon with a first graphical object, said icon having a specified color scheme; displaying said icon with said specified color scheme within said first graphical object; progressively displaying a series of graphical objects diverse from, but related to said first graphical object, said one or more related graphical objects to reflect an evolution of progression of development of said first graphical object, and wherein said icon with said specified color scheme is displayed within each of said related graphical objects.

The present invention also provides a computer-based system with visually related graphical objects comprising: at least one icon retained in computer storage, said icon having an associated color scheme and associated with a first graphical object; a display visually instantiating one or more graphical objects diverse from, but related to said first graphical object; wherein said icon with said associated color scheme is replicated within a visual space of said displayed one or more graphical objects related to said first object, and wherein said one or more displayed objects are visually recognizable as related due to the persistence of said icon with said associated color scheme.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-2, 5-10, 12-16 and 18-22 are rejected under 35U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lui et al. (US 2002/0118220) and Cataudella et al. (6,456,296).

Lui et al. teaches a computer-based assistance system for providing operational guidance of commands to use a computer program, the assistance system comprising: a command indicator for visually indicating to a user a portion of a display of the computer program corresponding to a specific command to be executed; and an interactive assistance object, responsive to the command indicator indicating the specific command, for interacting with the user to guide the user in execution of the specific command.

On pages 2-3 of the Office Action mailed 3/23/2007, the Examiner relies on Figures 4-6, 6A of the Lui reference as teaching the features of “associating at least one icon with at least two diverse, but related graphical objects, said icon having an associated color scheme” and “when one of said related graphical objects is displayed, displaying said icon within said displayed graphical object”.

It appears that the Examiner is relying on element 415 as teaching the icon of independent claims 1, 7, 12, 15, 19, and 21. However, as pointed out during the Interview of 05/18/2007, a closer examination of the figures and the accompanying description teaches otherwise. Specifically, element 415 in the cited figures is an **“interactive Guide Character”** which according to Lui’s own words in Paragraph 57 provides “a friendly personification or image to describe the Host application’s logic or operation”. Applicants respectfully assert (and

as can be seen from the reproduced figure) that “interactive Guide Character” 415 is merely an animated object that is used to provide help to the user and is NOT, as the Examiner asserts, an icon that is associated with at least two diverse, but related graphical objects, wherein the icon has an associated color scheme and, when one of said related graphical objects is displayed, an icon that is displayed within the displayed graphical object.” For example, the Examiner is directed to paragraph 60, wherein Lui outlines such an interaction for help.

Applicants further assert that the “interactive Guide Character” 415, by Lui’s own admission is associated with the “Host Application and the CHA system” and NOT associated with diverse, but related, graphical objects.

As per the Examiner’s suggestion, clarifying amendments have been made to the independent claims to clarify that the icons are distinguishable with each other. For example, current claim 1 teaches “associating a first icon with a first set of at least two diverse, but related graphical objects, said first icon having an first color scheme, and associating a second icon with a second set of at least two diverse, but related graphical objects, said second icon having a second color scheme, **said first and second icons being distinguishable from each other**”. Similar clarifying amendments have been made to independent claims 7, 12, 15, 19, and 21.

As pointed out by the Examiner himself in the Interview of 5/18/2003, such a feature of icons being distinguishable from each other is neither taught nor suggested by Lui. Also, as pointed out by the Examiner such a feature is not remedied by Cataudella. Hence, Applicants respectfully assert that the combination of Lui and Cataudella cannot teach or suggest many of

the features of independent claims 1, 7, 12, 15, 19, and 21. Therefore, allowance is respectfully requested of independent claims 1, 7, 12, 15, 19, and 21.

The above-mentioned arguments substantially apply to dependent claims 2, 5-6, 8-10, 13-14, 16, 18, 20, and 22 as they inherit all the features of the claim from which they depend from. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejections with respect to claims 2, 5-6, 8-10, 13-14, 16, 18, 20, and 22, and further request allowance thereof.

SUMMARY

As has been detailed above, none of the references, cited or applied, provide for the specific claimed details of Applicants' presently claimed invention, nor renders them obvious. It is believed that this case is in condition for allowance and reconsideration thereof and early issuance is respectfully requested.

As this response has been timely filed, no request for extension of time or associated fee is required. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies in the fees provided to Deposit Account No. 09-0460.

If it is felt that an interview would expedite prosecution of this application, please do not hesitate to contact Applicants' representative at the below number.

Respectfully submitted,

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